



Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control

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Hanford Remedial Action EIS
U.S. Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
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May 17, 1999

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As a professional in the field of erosion and sediment control with over 30 years of experience, nationally and particularly in the Northwest, I can say, unequivocally, that the conversion of any of the Wahluke Slope from a shrub steppe ecosystem and wildlife habitat to irrigated farming - even under strict management systems, would cause significant and serious erosion of the fragile topsoils. These high levels of erosion would cause the deposition of thousands of tons of sediments into the Columbia River, to the extreme detriment of the fishery, including quite a few that are either endangered and/or listed by the National Marine Fisheries Service. Based on the past history of the Palouse region of Washington, Oregon and Idaho, erosion due to tillage and irrigation will rapidly deplete the productivity of the soils of the Wahluke Slope.

Therefore, I support the Department of Energy's preferred alternative in the draft environmental impact statement and land use plan. However, it needs to provide for more and better protection of all of the natural, and especially the sensitive lands - and the soils - within the Hanford Nuclear Reservation.

The Department of Energy should include, within the national wildlife refuge, all of the public lands on the Wahluke Slope, the Hanford Reach especially its islands, the McGee Ranch, and the Arid Lands Ecology Reserve.

The Department of Energy should proceed immediately with a separate Record of Decision in order to establish the national wildlife refuge, and protect these special places and natural resource values in the Hanford Nuclear Reservation.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment and provide input.

Sincerely,

James G. Barrett
CPESC #2

